

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A rich media file stored in a machine-readable medium, comprising:

information to be displayed on a computer system, the information including text and at least one image, wherein the information is compressed using a compression technique to reduce the size of the rich media file;

a viewer designed to display the information on the computer system including a decompression engine to decompress the compressed rich media file, the information and the viewer contained in a single file; and

checking means for checking if there is a later version of the rich media file.

2. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 1, further comprising limit means for limiting viewing of the rich media file.

3. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 2, wherein the limit means is selected from a setting defining a predetermined number of viewings of the information, a setting defining a predetermined number of days, a predetermined expiration date, and a password controlling access to the rich media file.

4. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 2, wherein limit means is designed to expire the rich media file, and rich media file is designed so that it cannot be viewed after the rich media file has expired.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 1, further comprising a query asking a user if the user would like to retrieve a later version of the rich media file.

7. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 1, further comprising retrieval means for retrieving a later version of the rich media file.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 1, the rich media file further comprising a unique file identification in addition to a file name.

10. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 1, wherein the information is formatted into a plurality of pages.

11. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 10, wherein the information includes a link from a first page of the information to a second page of the information.

12. (Original) A rich media file according to claim 1, wherein the viewer includes only a capability desired by a builder of the rich media file.

13. (Previously Presented) A rich media file stored in a machine-readable medium, comprising:

information to be displayed on a computer system, the information including an image and compressed using a compression technique;

a viewer designed to display the information on the computer system;

limit means for limiting viewing of the rich media file, the limit means drawn from a setting defining a predetermined number of viewings of the information, a setting defining a predetermined number of days, a predetermined expiration date, and a password controlling access to the rich media file;

checking means for checking if there is a later version of the rich media file;

a query asking a user if the user would like to retrieve the later version of the rich media file;

retrieval means for retrieving the later version of the rich media file; and

a unique file identification for the rich media file in addition to a file name.

14. (Previously Presented) A method for retrieving a rich media file, the method comprising:

selecting a link on a network;

downloading the rich media file over the network based on a unique file identification other than the link and other than a file name, the rich media file including a viewer and information to be displayed in the viewer;

saving the rich media file on a computer system;

opening the rich media file using the viewer to display the information;

checking to see if a later version of the rich media file is available over the network; and asking a user if the user would like to retrieve the later version of the rich media file.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein selecting a link includes transmitting the unique file identification over the network.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein downloading the rich media file over the network from a remote server includes downloading the rich media file over the network from a remote server different from a second server that includes the link.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein downloading the rich media file includes downloading an earlier version of the rich media file.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein asking a user if the user would like to retrieve the later version of the rich media file includes, if the user requests the later version of the rich media file: downloading the later version rich media file; and opening the later version of the rich media file using a viewer built into the later version of the rich media file.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein opening the rich media file includes:

 checking to see if the rich media file has expired; and

 if the rich media file has expired, asking the user if a later version of the rich media file or chained file is desired.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 21, wherein checking to see if the rich media file has expired includes refusing to open the rich media file if the rich media file has expired.

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein opening the rich media file includes:

 prompting for a password; and

 refusing to open the rich media file if the password is not provided.

24. (Original) A method according to claim 14, the method further comprising deleting the rich media file, thereby leaving no footprint on the computer system.

25. (Original) A computer-readable medium containing a program to retrieve a rich media file, the program being executable on computer system to implement the method of claim 14.

26. (Currently Amended) A method for building a unitary rich media file, the method comprising:

 assembling information for the unitary rich media file;

 formatting the information;

 coupling the information with a viewer; and

 converting the information and the viewer to the unitary rich media file, so that if the unitary rich media file is ~~designed to leave no footprint on a user's system when removed, neither the information nor the viewer remains on a user's system.~~

27. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein formatting the information includes placing the information on a plurality of pages.

28. (Original) A method according to claim 27, wherein formatting the information further includes placing a link on a first page of the information to a second page of the information.

29. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein formatting the information includes selecting viewing options to include with the rich media file.

30. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein formatting the information includes assigning expiration parameters to the rich media file.

31. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein formatting the information includes placing the information into a platform-independent intermediary state.

32. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein coupling the information with a viewer includes coupling the information with the viewer for a particular computer platform.

33. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein converting the information includes formatting the information from an intermediate file format to a format for display in the rich media file, the format for display designed to work with the viewer on a particular platform.

34. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein converting the information includes compressing an image in the information.

35. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein converting the information includes converting the information to the rich media file at a server not owned by a client building the rich media file.

36. (Original) A method according to claim 26, the method further comprising: storing the rich media file on a server; and placing a link to the rich media file on a web page over a computer network.

37. (Original) A method according to claim 36, wherein storing the rich media file includes assigning the rich media file a unique file identification in addition to a file name.

38. (Original) A method according to claim 37, wherein placing a link includes using the unique file identification in the link.

39. (Original) A method according to claim 36, wherein storing the rich media file includes storing the rich media file on a server different from the one storing the link.

40. (Original) A method according to claim 36, wherein storing the rich media file includes retaining an earlier version of the rich media file on the server.

41. (Previously Presented) A computer-readable medium containing a program to retrieve a rich media file, the program being executable on a computer system to implement the method of claim 26.

42. (Previously Presented) A memory for storing a platform-independent rich media file including a data structure stored in said memory, comprising:
information for the rich media file;
a unique identification for the rich media file;
a version number for the rich media file;
a viewer for displaying the information; and
at least one viewing option for the rich media file; and

a client identification for a client creating the rich media file.

43. (Canceled)

44. (Original) A memory according to claim 42, wherein the data structure further includes expiration features.

45. (Canceled)

46. (Previously Presented) A memory for storing a database of rich media files including a data structure stored in said memory, comprising:

a rich media file, the rich media file including information and a viewer to view the information;

a profile of a user who downloaded the rich media file;

a client who generated the rich media file; and

a log storing a transaction in the data structure.

47. (Original) A memory according to claim 46, the data structure further including a mapping from the rich media file to the client.

48. (Original) A memory according to claim 46, the data structure further including an auto-notification for the user when the rich media file is updated.

49. (Canceled)

50. (Canceled)

51. (Previously Presented) A rich media file according to claim 13, wherein the information further includes text.

52. (New) A rich media file stored in a machine-readable medium, comprising:
a client identifier to identify a creator of the rich media file;
a unique identifier to identify the rich media file;
a version number identifying a version of the rich media file;
a print module to enable printing of the rich media file if included by the creator of the rich media file and to disable printing if excluded by the creator;

a first dialogue box structured to appear responsive to viewing limits of the rich media file, the first dialogue box to communicate to a user an invitation to access another rich media file;

a second dialogue box structured to appear responsive to an update offer, the second dialogue box for prompting the user of the rich media file to check for a newer version of the rich media file;

a requester structured to retrieve the newer version of the rich media file responsive to an action by the user according to the update offer;

information to be displayed on a computer system, the information including text, at least one still image, and structured to include at least one of an animated image, a link to a web page, and an email link; and

a viewer built-in to the rich media file to display the information on the computer system, wherein the client identifier, the unique identifier, the version number, the print module, the viewing limits, the update offer, the requester, the information to be displayed, and the built-in viewer comprise a single file.